

# Michigan Commission of Agriculture Meeting Minutes

July 2000

Michigan Department of Agriculture  
Commission of Agriculture  
Ottawa State Office Building, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Pridgeon Conference Room  
611 West Ottawa Street, Lansing, Michigan

## Meeting Minutes

July 10-11, 2000

### **PRESENT:**

James Maitland, Chair, Commission of Agriculture  
Jordan Tatter, Vice-Chair, Commission of Agriculture  
Shirley Skogman, Secretary, Commission of Agriculture  
Douglas Darling, Commission of Agriculture  
Deanna Stamp, Commission of Agriculture  
Dan Wyant, Director, Michigan Department of Agriculture

### **OTHERS PRESENT:** *(All or part of the meeting):*

Michigan Department of Agriculture Staff  
Tom Butler, Michigan Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Association  
Jerry Crandall, MIRS  
Dan Marsh, Michigan Elk and Deer Breeders Association  
Jody Pollok, Michigan Corn Marketing Program

### **CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Chair James Maitland called the meeting of the Commission of Agriculture to order at 2:00 p.m., on Monday, July 10, 2000. Commissioner Skogman called the roll with Director Wyant and all Commissioners present.

### **APPROVAL OF JULY 10-11, 2000, MEETING AGENDA**

MOTION: COMMISSIONER STAMP MOVED TO APPROVE THE JULY 10-11, 2000, COMMISSION OF AGRICULTURE MEETING AGENDA AS PRESENTED. SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

### **APPROVAL OF MAY 31-JUNE 1, 2000, MEETING MINUTES**

MOTION: COMMISSIONER TATTER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MAY 31-JUNE 1, 2000, COMMISSION OF AGRICULTURE MEETING MINUTES WITH A CORRECTION TO PAGE 5, PARAGRAPH 8, LINE 4, TO ADD THE WORD "BAN." SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

### **NEXT MEETING:**

The next regular meeting of the Commission of Agriculture will be held on Thursday, August 17, 2000, and Friday, August 18, 2000, at the Day's Inn, 2603 North Lincoln Road, Escanaba, Michigan (held in conjunction with the Upper Peninsula State Fair.)

### **APPROVAL OF DIRECTOR'S OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL:**

MOTION: COMMISSIONER DARLING MOVED TO APPROVE DIRECTOR WYANT'S OUT-OF-STATE

TRAVEL TO ATTEND AN EPA MEETING HELD IN CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, JUNE 9, 2000. SECONDED.  
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

### **COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS:**

Commissioner Jordan Tatter distributed copies of the *Executive Summary of Act 51 Transportation Funding Study Committee*. Commissioner Tatter was a member of the study committee.

Commissioner Tatter reported that there is plenty of water at the present time in Southwest Michigan. Corn is either shoulder high or drowned out within a few yards down the row. There are many dead spots in corn and bean fields. The rains have kept the spray rigs running, and chemical inputs per acre for horticultural crops are at an all-time dollar high for this early in the season. Since the last Commission meeting, Commissioner Tatter participated in the following agriculture related activities:

- VanBuren County/MSU Extension Council quarterly meeting;
- Berrien, Cass, Van Buren County Workforce Development bimonthly board meeting;
- Michigan Food Processors annual meeting held in Lewiston;
- MSU/Berrien County Alumni annual steak fry;
- Fireblight tour of Berrien and Van Buren counties, conducted by the Michigan Farm Bureau, MDA and MSU;
- Emcee for the annual Fruit Crop Guesstimate, sponsored by the Michigan Frozen Food Packers Association; and
- The Cherry Industry Administrative Board Grower information meeting for Southwestern Michigan.

Commissioner Tatter expressed his appreciation to MDA staff for the excellent tour of the fireblight areas in Southwest Michigan.

He also spent time with Dr. Dan Graham at the MDA Atlanta Regional Office learning firsthand about the activities in combating bovine TB in domestic livestock in Northern Michigan. Commissioner Tatter believes that the State of Michigan should avail itself of the same procedure as a livestock producer with a bovine TB infected herd. When the State makes a whole herd purchase, the reactor animals should be handled in the normal manner. The balance of the herd should immediately go to a federally inspected slaughter facility and the State then can recover a portion of its indemnification outlay.

Commissioner Tatter reported that the fireblight problem hit apples in Southwest Michigan with a vengeance. The out-of-pocket financial loss to apple growers in Berrien and Van Buren counties alone will exceed that of bovine TB statewide this year, unless there is a disaster grant program for affected producers. This disease will put some apple growers out of business. There is nothing currently available other than low-interest loans. The producers may not be able to qualify for these loans because of their net worth or because they have already had other disaster loans and no longer have loanable equity. Apple farmers would like to be looked upon the same as livestock producers, and they need special help right now.

Commissioner Deanna Stamp said that varied crop reports are being received throughout the state. She spoke with an older farmer from the Saginaw Valley recently who noted that there have been more crops replanted this season than any time in his memory. In the southern part of the Thumb, crops are looking very good for this time of year.

Commissioner Stamp has received concerns from livestock producers about bovine TB testing requirements. The concern is not about the requirement to test, but about the availability of state and federal veterinarians. Concern also was expressed about the wage scale the state is offering to veterinarians and if it is competitive with private industry. There is continuing concern about not being able to get the problem under control. She said that the livestock producers are appreciative of the state and federal support, but continue to be concerned about the amount of money being spent on the issue while not being able to control the problem because of the disease in wildlife. She said that there has been discussion about the federal government earmarking millions of dollars to the states, which includes Texas, to eradicate bovine TB in one small area of that state. Another

\$40 million would be available to Michigan. She believes that, unless the entire situation is brought under control, there will be millions of dollars being spent that may be wasted. The issue of baiting and feeding in Michigan is of concern and the state needs full support from everyone to address the problem.

Director Wyant responded that the State has reviewed the wage scale issue and has found that it is competitive at the entry level, but less than competitive over time. This issue needs to be addressed if the State wants to attract the number and quality of people that are needed. The resources are available, the plan is in place, and now it is the issue of hiring qualified people. Director Wyant said that the federal government has proposed a \$110 million federal increase in its national TB eradication plan, whereby Texas will receive \$60 million. Most of the \$110 million is targeted for Michigan for additional testing teams and a substantial increase in research and wildlife surveillance.

Commissioner Shirley Skogman reported that the crops and weather in the Upper Peninsula are also sporadic. Wisconsin is facing a serious potato blight problem. She said that she attended an auction where equipment that should have sold for \$25,000 or more, sold for only \$650 to \$5,000. The Seed Potato Association of Michigan held a steak fry that offered an opportunity for producers and buyers to get together. Commissioner Skogman thanked MDA staff for their assistance in researching her question last month about Michigan cattle being ear tagged and receiving less money in Wisconsin markets. She reported that the Dave Holli stud mill (Sawyer Lumber Company) was sold to Louisiana Pacific, a national forest industry company.

Commissioner Douglas Darling reported that there has been excessive rain in Southeast Michigan. There is water standing in the fields and some replanting has been lost due to the wet weather. It looks like the crops will be fair this year. He said that a number of part-time producers, especially in metropolitan areas who did not sign up in the federal farm program, are not eligible for assistance programs. Commissioner Darling said that he is hopeful that discussions will continue on land use value assessment. He attended the bovine TB meeting that was held in Saline, Michigan on June 14. Kevin Kirk of the Animal Industry Division did an outstanding job addressing and responding to questions. He noted that he also has heard concerns about the amount of money being spent on the bovine TB issue.

Commissioner James Maitland reported that the cherry harvest has begun in the Traverse City area. The crop is light, but is of good quality. The National Cherry Festival was held last week and was well attended. Commissioner Maitland noted that the tart cherry price is better than last year, but still less than the cost of production, and a continuing problem for the cherry industry. He noted that there is a light crop of apples in the area. The weather in the Traverse City area has not been a problem.

### **CONFERENCE CALL—UPDATE ON BOVINE TUBERCULOSIS:** **Dr. Michael Chaddock, State Veterinarian, Animal Industry Division**

Dr. Michael Chaddock and staff are attending the Michigan Veterinary Medical Association annual meeting. Dr. Chaddock participated in today's meeting by telephone:

Dr. Chaddock provided the following update on the bovine tuberculosis situation in Michigan:

- Since the June Commission meeting, no new bovine tuberculosis cases have been reported in Michigan's livestock.
- On June 28, 2000, USDA announced in the Federal Register a change in Michigan's statewide status to non-modified accredited. The change in status took effect on June 22, 2000.

Because of Michigan's non-modified accredited status, the Pasteurized Milk Ordinance (PMO) stipulates that all Michigan dairy farms must have a yearly whole herd negative test to continue to sell milk. In October 1999, USDA granted Michigan a non-modified accredited status for the quarantine zone in Northeast Michigan. There are approximately 162 dairy farms in the Northeast Michigan area, and the deadline to complete their testing is October 20, 2000. Letters have been mailed to all Michigan dairy farms informing them of the required testing. The tests can be performed by state or federal veterinarians, or by private practitioners. The state is covering the testing costs performed by private practitioners. Michigan has one year from June 22, 2000, to complete testing on Michigan dairies statewide.

Due to individual state statutes, there most likely will be revisions in some of their importation requirements. The names and addresses of all state veterinarians are posted on MDA's Website ([www.mda.state.mi.us](http://www.mda.state.mi.us)) to assist producers in contacting other states to learn about their requirements.

The top priorities for MDA at the present time are to work with Michigan dairy farmers on testing; to complete testing for those who desire to show cattle at fairs; and to complete all of the testing in the Upper Peninsula.

- As of July 7, 2000, 2,004 beef and dairy herds have been tested statewide. Of those 2,004, 1,159 were tested in the quarantine area. Testing has occurred in almost every Michigan county.

The total number of cattle receiving whole herd testing is 63,889 head. From January 1995 to July 7, 2000, 86,509 tests have been performed, which includes multiple testing. Of those 86,509 tests, 4,865 or 5.5 percent have been caudal fold responders.

- Dr. Tina Burke and Dr. George Winegar of the Animal Industry Division are working with USDA and custom slaughterhouses. They have visited 104 establishments in Michigan. Dr. Burke is currently visiting Upper Peninsula custom slaughter facilities. Education is still a key component.
- Training sessions have been completed with 290 licensed accredited veterinarians. Some veterinarians from the northern counties of Indiana also have attended these sessions.
- USDA has established teams consisting of four veterinarians and four technicians to assist current staff in the comparative cervical follow-ups. These four teams will be placed strategically throughout Michigan and will be in the state through September 2000.
- The issue of baled hay and silage being tested on those farms where TB was found was discussed at the June Commission meeting. Dr. Kaneene of MSU and his graduate students are visiting those farms to collect environmental samples of hay, silage, soil, and water. These samples will be sent to the laboratory for culture and testing.
- The question of how many animals have been found with bovine tuberculosis in slaughterhouses was asked at the June Commission meeting. One dairy cow was found in 1993 Isabella County. From the traceback testing that was performed, which was approximately 7,000 to 8,000 animals, no other tuberculosis was found.
- The issue of performing additional testing for other diseases other than tuberculosis on those animals sent to the MSU diagnostic laboratory was asked at the June Commission meeting. Not only would additional testing be difficult for Laboratory staff due to limited resources and facilities, there also is the question of producers granting approval for additional testing to be performed on the animal.
- The concern about the marketing of calves from Michigan to Wisconsin and those calves being tagged and receiving a lower market value was raised at the June Commission meeting. Dr. Debbi Donch of the Animal Industry Division has investigated the issue and there does not appear to be any evidence that Michigan calves are being discriminated against in regard to price. However, Wisconsin regulators are checking all paperwork closely.

Dr. Chris Wolf, an agricultural economist at MSU, is researching how Michigan producers are being affected economically by the bovine tuberculosis issue. One specific question is whether cattle from Northeast Michigan are being discriminated against on price.

The Indiana Board of Animal Health is holding a hearing on July 13, 2000, to discuss its state's importation requirements. Dr. Chaddock spoke with Indiana's State Veterinarian who has indicated that his state might consider easing some of the restrictions on post-entry tests. Indiana continues to be concerned about those animals coming into the state from Michigan areas identified with bovine TB. The Indiana State Veterinarian will be recommending to the Indiana Board of Animal Health that tests not be imposed if the cattle are coming in from areas other than where TB was found.

Commissioner Darling asked if there is a plan to start testing on the southern tier of Michigan counties and work northward. The state then could request zoning from USDA.

Dr. Chaddock responded that many factors must be considered before the state could begin testing in this

manner; i.e., a boundary would have to be decided upon that would be transparent, and how would the requirements be enforced for animals to cross beyond that boundary.

Commissioner Tatter suggested that when Dr. Chaddock and Director Wyant meet with the Indiana Animal Health Board they should mention that there are fence lines in some areas along the southern tier of Michigan that touches Ohio and Indiana where animals can be nose to nose. There also are deer crossing those fences and state boundaries. State lines are not good science, just convenient.

Commissioner Tatter also asked if a herd has one or more reactors, and the owner elects not to have the state purchase the whole herd, only the reactors, can the remaining animals be sold for slaughter through a federally inspected slaughterhouse?

Dr. Chaddock does not believe those animals could be sold until the disposition of the reactors is known. He believes that a slaughterhouse could be found once it is shown that the reactors are not infected. Dr. Winegar has talked with slaughterhouses in other states that have expressed an interest in taking cattle from an infected herd, once that herd is on a herd plan.

Commissioner Stamp asked about the herd that is currently under a herd plan. What is the next step after the 60-day retest?

Dr. Chaddock said that the herd plan has been developed and has been presented to the producer by Dr. John Molesworth of MSU-Extension. However, Dr. Molesworth has indicated that the producer still has questions about the plan and it has not been signed.

Commissioner Skogman believes that MDA is working beyond the call of duty to eradicate the problem of bovine TB in Michigan. She also believes that agriculture is not receiving the full cooperation of the other factor in the equation—the deer. How do we respond to those who ask if the amount of money spent on this problem can be justified?

Dr. Chaddock believes the plan developed by agriculture, the wildlife interests, USDA, MDA, DNR, and the Department of Community Health is sound. It does include extensive wildlife surveillance; however, it needs to extend beyond the fall hunting season. USDA set the numbers, and Michigan has exceeded those numbers. However, deer numbers must be reduced and dispersed so they avoid nose to nose contact. Dr. Chaddock believes that DNR is working in that direction.

Dr. Chaddock explained that he and Dr. Steve Schmitt of the Department of Natural Resources have agreed from the beginning that this is a long-term situation and will take patience to see it through.

Commissioner Tatter asked that the data gathered from Dr. Kaneene's research be shared with the DNR and the Natural Resources Commission.

Dr. Chaddock agreed and suggested having Dr. Kaneene present his research at an upcoming Commission meeting.

Director Wyant said that legislative changes would be made to allow Michigan to get testing in place to pursue zoning or split state status, particularly for the Upper Peninsula. He also said that a separate Bovine Tuberculosis Unit would be set up in the Animal Industry Division. He emphasized that there are resources available to get the testing done in the U.P.

Commissioner Stamp noted that one of the large dairy farmers, whose herd was recently tested, had very high praise for the MDA veterinary staff and the way that the testing was conducted.

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Dan Wyant**

*Ag Disaster Update:* Dave Charney of the Emergency Management Section explained that wet and humid weather during May in Southwest Michigan set the stage for the current fireblight problem. Severe weather events also contributed to the apple tree and crop damage. Dave Charney of the Emergency Management Section explained that wet and humid weather during May in Southwest Michigan set the stage for the current

fireblight problem. Severe weather events also contributed to the apple tree and crop damage.

MDA, in cooperation with the Michigan Farm Bureau, MSU-Extension, and the USDA-Farm Service Agency, arranged a tour of the affected area on June 21, 2000. A meeting was held in a local grower's barn, with about 150 local growers and several representatives of Michigan's Congressional offices in attendance. On June 29, 2000, at the recommendation of the State Emergency Board and with the support of the Governor, a request was made to Secretary Dan Glickman for an agricultural disaster declaration. If granted, the declaration will allow eligible farmers to receive low interest loans.

Tom Butler of the Michigan Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Association (MACMA) expressed his appreciation for the Department of Agriculture's quick response to the problem. He also expressed his appreciation to Robin Rosenbaum, Pesticide Registration Manager for MDA's Pesticide and Plant Pest Management Division.

He said that this situation has caused a great hardship to the apple producers. Fireblight is an economic problem in Southwest Michigan and has affected producers in the counties of Van Buren, Berrien, Allegan, Cass, Kalamazoo, Branch and Hillsdale. Contiguous counties also could be affected and may request financial assistance. Mr. Butler said that he has received telephone calls from growers in Kent and Ottawa counties who are also dealing with the fireblight problem.

Mr. Butler distributed information, prepared by Mark Longstroth of Michigan State University Extension, entitled, *"The Fireblight Epidemic in Southwest Michigan,"* and *"Estimated Losses from Fireblight--Van Buren & Berrien Counties--July 2000."* The total estimated loss for Van Buren and Berrien counties is \$25.8 million, which Mr. Butler believes is a conservative figure. Funds also are being sought from other sources to assist the apple producers affected by the fireblight problem. A five-year federal grant, shared by MSU and Cornell University, was attained to research the fireblight problem. The grant period has ended and growers will pursue additional funding until a cure is found.

Director Wyant added that Senator Spencer Abraham and Congressman Fred Upton, with the support of other members of Michigan's Congressional delegation, sent a letter to Secretary Glickman requesting that a specific disaster program be developed for fruit trees.

*Gasoline Price Situation:* Celeste Bennett of the Motor Fuels Quality Section reported that MDA has received a number of consumer complaints related to the high cost of gasoline. Even though MDA does not have control over gasoline prices, it is important that it is aware of what is happening in the marketplace. She explained that some of the factors that affect gasoline price are distribution, marketing, retail station costs and profits, refining costs and profits, federal and state taxes, and crude oil. Celeste Bennett of the Motor Fuels Quality Section reported that MDA has received a number of consumer complaints related to the high cost of gasoline. Even though MDA does not have control over gasoline prices, it is important that it is aware of what is happening in the marketplace. She explained that some of the factors that affect gasoline price are distribution, marketing, retail station costs and profits, refining costs and profits, federal and state taxes, and crude oil.

*Director's Monthly Activities:* Director Wyant reviewed and distributed a report of his monthly activities.

*Presentation to Tom Whalen, director of the Laboratory Division:* Director Wyant presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Tom Whalen for his participation in the National Food Safety Project and for his continued efforts to assure safety in the food supply, reduce foodborne illnesses, and promote collaboration among federal, state and local foodborne disease agencies. The certificate was given by Janice Oliver of the Food and Drug Administration and chair of the National Food Safety Steering Committee. Director Wyant presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Tom Whalen for his participation in the National Food Safety Project and for his continued efforts to assure safety in the food supply, reduce foodborne illnesses, and promote collaboration among federal, state and local foodborne disease agencies. The certificate was given by Janice Oliver of the Food and Drug Administration and chair of the National Food Safety Steering Committee.

Commissioner Tatter commended Laboratory Division staff for receiving recognition by other national agencies for its important laboratory work.

## **LEGISLATIVE REPORT: Brad Deacon, Legislative Liaison**

Brad Deacon, Legislative Liaison, distributed and reviewed the *July 2000 Legislative Report*. He also distributed a July 6, 2000, letter from the Governor to MDA regarding its budget. Mr. Deacon highlighted the following:

- The Governor signed the farmland preservation package into law. However, the proposed constitutional amendment did not receive support and will not be on the ballot in the fall. The Farmland Preservation Trust Fund bill was signed creating a fund and board that will be housed within MDA. The PA116 program will be transferred from DNR to MDA. The Governor also signed SB1251 establishing ag renaissance zones for agriculture producers.
- HB5570 (PA206), prohibiting MTBE as an additive, was signed into law.
- HB4427 and HB4428 (PA190 & PA 191), relating to privately owned cervidae, were both signed into law.
- SB705 (PA246), regulating the possession of wolf hybrids, was signed into law.
- HB4752, increasing the requirements for mail-ordered alcoholic beverages, was ordered enrolled.

Mr. Deacon said that three MDA priorities for the fall session would be the Animal Industry Act, organic legislation, and the drain code.

Director Wyant reported that Project GREEN has been moved from MDA's budget into the higher education bill, specifically for Michigan State University.

### **AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES:**

#### **Robert Craig of the Office of Agriculture Development**

Robert Craig of the Office of Agriculture Development, and members of his staff provided an update on current agricultural development activities.

*Ethanol:* Vince Parris distributed and reviewed information regarding ethanol. To date, approximately 370 farmers have invested \$500 each to determine the feasibility of the proposed ethanol project. Once the feasibility study is completed, the farmer-based group, the Michigan Corn Products Development Committee, is preparing to offer stock to investors at the end of this calendar year.. Ken Swanson is the interim chair of the 12-member board. The ethanol plant should be under construction within the next year. A meeting will be held on July 12, 2000, to discuss the findings from the tours of other plants, and to select a construction firm and a potential site for the plant. The board will recommend a plant that will produce 40 million gallons, with a cost of approximately \$50 million. Vince Parris distributed and reviewed information regarding ethanol. To date, approximately 370 farmers have invested \$500 each to determine the feasibility of the proposed ethanol project. Once the feasibility study is completed, the farmer-based group, the Michigan Corn Products Development Committee, is preparing to offer stock to investors at the end of this calendar year.. Ken Swanson is the interim chair of the 12-member board. The ethanol plant should be under construction within the next year. A meeting will be held on July 12, 2000, to discuss the findings from the tours of other plants, and to select a construction firm and a potential site for the plant. The board will recommend a plant that will produce 40 million gallons, with a cost of approximately \$50 million.

Commissioner Stamp asked how many bushels of corn would be needed to produce 40 million gallons.

Mr. Parris responded that would be 14.5 million bushels.

Mr. Parris said that MDA, the Department of Consumer and Industry Services, and the Corn Marketing Program of Michigan are sponsoring an Ethanol Workshop in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Energy, Regional Biomass Energy Program. The workshop will be held in Lansing, August 15, 2000, and participants will discuss opportunities and constraints associated with the production and promotion of ethanol as a viable alternative fuel. The Michigan workshop will focus on issues especially related to our state.

Jody Pollock, Executive Director of the Corn Marketing Committee of Michigan, said that the Corn Marketing Committee had originally requested the feasibility study for this ethanol plant. Growers had a major role in developing the plant. The Michigan Corn Growers Association has also been actively involved in the MTBE ban. It is working with other corn growing states on educating the consumer about ethanol in gasoline. The

states will be sending a letter to the Federal Trade Commission requesting that it review price fixing in the petroleum industry. There are many promotional efforts underway to promote ethanol, such as news releases being issued on a weekly basis, the hiring of a communications person, and joining the Michigan Coalition for Ethanol.

Mr. Craig distributed and reviewed a report entitled, *"An Analysis of the Importance of Agriculture and the Food Sector to the Michigan Economy,"* by Dr. John (Jake) Ferris, Department of Agricultural Economics, Michigan State University. The report states that *"if Michigan agriculture's share of the forward linked industries of wholesaling and retailing is added, total employment related directly or indirectly to farming and food processing is estimated to be 500,000 and output to be \$37 billion. The total direct and related employment in agriculture and the food system is about one million, about a fourth of total employment in the state."*

Mr. Craig also distributed copies of *"The Office of Agriculture Development 1999 Annual Report."*

#### *International Marketing Program:*

*International Marketing Program:* Paul Burke and Steve Kwasnik gave a presentation on MDA's International Marketing Program. The following areas were highlighted and discussed:

- Michigan Agriculture Export Advisory (MAXA) Council
- International Market Development Grants
- Apple Promotion in Israel
- Wine Promotion in Germany
- Pickle Promotion in Korea
- Other International Marketing Program Activities
- Hog Shipments to Canada
- Soybean Promotion in Japan
- Organic Products Market Research in Europe
- Latin American Cheese Importers Trade Team
- Michigan Organic Products Promotion in Japan
- Michigan Japan Office Director in Michigan to meet with Cooperative Elevator, Graceland Fruit, Belle Vista Farms, Organic Growers of Michigan, Thistle Down Farms & Organic Bean & Grain LLC
- Taiwan Organic Products Buyer
- President Costa Rican Dry Bean Importers Association
- Agricultural Trade Officers in Michigan
- Mock Apple Protocol for Mexico
- Branded MAP
- Three Market Development Proposals submitted to MIATCO for funding

Dr. Larry Granger of the Office of Agriculture Development discussed the marketing of hogs. The Ontario Pork Board markets Ontario-produced pork and every pig that is sold in Ontario to an Ontario packing plant is assessed at the time the packer buys the pig. The assessment is then returned to the Board. In the U.S., there is a National Pork Producers Council that receives a .035-cent per pound assessment used to maintain educational activities as part of a checkoff that supports the state organization. The money is collected from producers when a feeder or breeder is sold. It is also collected from those who import animals from other countries for slaughter

Canadian pigs that come into the U.S. also pay the checkoff assessment. In Ontario the pigs that are sent from



the U.S. do not get assessed by the Ontario board, neither does the board receive any assessment on pigs sold from Ontario into this country. Rules will be published in the Federal Register this week calling for a referendum on the checkoff. Producers will vote in September 2000. However, as soon as the rules are published, Michigan will be spearheading legal action by filing suit against Secretary of Agriculture Glickman to have an injunction imposed against holding the referendum. The other participating states are Kansas, Missouri, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, and possibly North Carolina and Louisiana.

Dr. Granger reported that the turkey industry in Michigan is improving. The turkey growers were successful in leveraging their equity contribution. It originally began as a cooperative, but they were unable to receive funding from the traditional lending sources based on a 25 percent equity investment. After some restructuring, financing was secured, and the plant is operational with approximately 15,000 to 17,000 head per day being processed. New processing technology is being used enabling them to market a superior product.

#### **APPROVAL OF REVISED SELECTION CRITERIA AND SCORING SYSTEM FOR PURCHASE OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS:**

##### **Richard Harlow of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources**

Richard Harlow of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources requested Commission approval of the Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Scoring System. The Commission of Agriculture had approved the draft at its June meeting, but at a Natural Resources Commission meeting that followed a change was made on page 4, item 6. The change included the addition of the wording *"or all or a portion of the property is enrolled in the Private Forestry Act (part 513 of NREPA) or the Commercial Forestry Act (Part 512 of NREPA) or the Hunter Access Program (Part 435 of NREPA)."*

MOTION: COMMISSIONER DARLING MOVED TO APPROVE THE PURCHASE OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS PDR SCORING SYSTEM WITH THE CHANGE AS PRESENTED. SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

#### **RIGHT TO FARM ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLAINTS:**

##### **Wayne Whitman of the Environmental Stewardship Division**

Wayne Whitman of the Environmental Stewardship Division reviewed four Right to Farm files and recommended that the Commission of Agriculture send a letter to each of the following owners:

1. Bob Goodell near Flushing, Michigan, owns a 25-horse facility. MDA has visited with Mr. Goodell regarding complaints it received on the stockpiling of manure. MDA recommended that Mr. Goodell develop a plan consistent with the GAAMP for Manure Management and Utilization practices to address the manure mismanagement problem. Mr. Whitman recommends that a letter be sent to Mr. Goodell from the Commission stating that the facility does not conform with acceptable practices under the Right to Farm Act. The letter also states that pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding between MDA and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), his file will be transferred to that agency.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER TATTER MOVED TO APPROVE THAT THE COMMISSION OF AGRICULTURE SEND THE LETTER TO MR. BOB GOODELL AS PRESENTED. SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

2. Donald Jensen of Manistee County, owns a 32-cow dairy operation. The DEQ had identified a problem with stream bank erosion and sediment disposition from unrestricted access to Cool Creek. The U.S. Forest Service accompanied MDA to meet with the owner. USDA and Mr. Jensen developed a plan to be implemented by May 15, 2000, for stream bank fencing at a cattle crossing. MDA visited the premises on June 29, 2000, but inspectors were denied access to the property. A telephone call was also made to Mr. Jensen, but he refused to discuss the situation.

MOTION: COMMISSION SKOGMAN MOVED TO APPROVE THAT THE

COMMISSION OF AGRICULTURE SEND THE LETTER TO MR. DONALD JENSEN AS PRESENTED. SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Director Wyant asked if Mr. Jensen would agree to meet with his local officials, rather than government officials.

Mr. Whitman replied that local officials have visited the farm to offer assistance.

3. Mr. Pete Hassing of Van Buren County owns a small beef herd. DEQ referred this issue to MDA in April of 1999 when it had observed uncontrolled livestock access to a stream, stream bank erosion and sediment deposition. The stream outlets into a recreation lake. MDA visited the location to verify the problems. A plan was developed and Mr. Hassing implemented most of the work last summer by installing stream bank fencing. However, he did not complete the cattle crossing as designed. MDA met with Mr. Hassing on June 2, 2000, to insist that he stabilize the crossing. Mr. Hassing has contacted MSU Extension and is willing to work with MDA on the necessary changes. Mr. Whitman has prepared a letter to Mr. Hassing outlining the situation and giving a deadline of July 31, 2000.

Commissioner Tatter offered to meet with Mr. Hassing to discuss the situation if needed.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER TATTER MOVED TO APPROVE THAT THE COMMISSION OF AGRICULTURE SEND THE LETTER TO MR. PETE HASSING AS PRESENTED. SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

4. Dale Irish of Saginaw County owns a hog facility on the banks of the Flint River. The local health department referred a complaint to MDA that the manure storage structure was overflowing causing a potential runoff to the river. They were also concerned about the improper disposal of dead hogs. MDA visited with Mr. Irish to review the complaints. Mr. Irish has resolved the disposal issue. However, Mr. Irish has not developed and implemented a plan consistent with the GAAMP for Manure Management and Utilization practices to address the manure overflow problem.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER SKOGMAN MOVED TO APPROVE THAT THE COMMISSION OF AGRICULTURE SEND THE LETTER TO MR. DALE IRISH AS PRESENTED. SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chair Maitland asked Mr. Whitman if activity has increased since the adoption of the GAAMP for Site Selection and Odor Control for New and Expanding Livestock Production Facilities.

Mr. Whitman said there have been six requests to MDA to do preliminary site investigations. MDA also has received many calls from township officials, farmers, and others regarding the new GAAMP.

Commissioner Tatter asked if the seven-day response requirement was a problem.

Mr. Whitman responded that since the first of the year the average response time is five days. Since March, the response time is less than five days.

#### **IMPACT OF CHANGES TO CHLORPYRIFOS LABEL:**

#### **Kenneth Rauscher and Robin Rosenbaum of the Pesticide and Plant Pest Management Division**

Kenneth Rauscher, director of the Pesticide and Plant Pest Management Division distributed and reviewed information from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regarding "*Chlorpyrifos Revised Risk Assessment and Risk Mitigation Measures*." He explained that on June 8, 2000, the EPA provided a revised risk assessment and announced an agreement with the registrant Dow Chemical on some reduced residue tolerances for Chlorpyrifos. Chlorpyrifos is more widely

known as Lorsban or Dursban. This is a major molecule for Dow and a major molecule for agricultural chemicals.

Robin Rosebaum, Pesticide Registration Manager, explained that this change was a scheduled part of Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA) reassessment tolerances. FQPA sets a more stringent safety standard for most pesticides, and offers special protection for children. It decreases the use of Chlorpyrifos on apples, terminating or canceling all post-bloom applications, and cancels the use on tomatoes.

EPA will also propose to lower tolerance on the maximum residue limit on apples, revoke the tolerance on tomatoes, and lower the tolerance on grapes to a level that will only allow for dormant applications. These actions will reduce acute dietary risks by 75 percent, effectively eliminating dietary risk concerns for children and others. It will also cancel and phase out nearly all indoor and outdoor residential uses. It will reduce exposure to Chlorpyrifos through the drinking water.

Chlorpyrifos use in schools, parks, and other settings where children may be exposed also will be canceled. The agreement will help mitigate worker risks by implementing Restricted Entry Intervals for agricultural uses. By August 1, 2000, Chlorpyrifos registrants also will be proposing lower application rates, lower frequencies of treatment and longer time periods between applications and harvest for some agricultural uses. Under the agreement, public health uses, including applications to fire ant mounds and ultra low volume applications for mosquito control, will be allowed to continue. Use on apples will be restricted to pre-bloom; tolerance on grapes will be lowered and tomato use will be canceled.

Changes also were made to residential uses such as home, lawn and garden, schools, parks, daycare centers, and commercial buildings. Sale of products for these uses will end December 31, 2001.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

No public comment was received.

#### **MICHIGAN COMMISSION OF AGRICULTURE RESOLUTION ON DISASTER ASSISTANCE:**

MOTION: COMMISSIONER TATTER MOVED TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION ON DISASTER ASSISTANCE AS PRESENTED. SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

WHEREAS, excessive Spring rainfall and high humidity in South and Southwest Michigan created a weather condition conducive to the proliferation of the bacteria known as fireblight; and,

WHEREAS, a severe storm containing high winds, heavy rain and hail struck South and Southwest Michigan on May 18, 2000, creating scars and wounds in apple trees such that the fireblight bacteria was able to enter the trees; and,

WHEREAS, the resultant outbreak of fireblight in apple orchards in Southwest Michigan is the worst in memory, with at least 2,200 acres of apple trees in this region dead or dying and an additional 5,400 acres infected and at risk from this insidious disease; and,

WHEREAS, growers in this region have suffered not only the loss of this year's crop, but they must also remove and replant their trees, incurring additional expense and leaving them without a crop to harvest for at least the next five years; and,

WHEREAS, this situation will have a serious negative economic impact on the agricultural economy of South and Southwest Michigan where apple production provides \$30 to \$40 million in economic value each year; and,

WHEREAS, Governor Engler has requested a Secretarial Agricultural Disaster Designation from

the United States Department of Agriculture to provide low-interest loan assistance to affected growers in South and Southwest Michigan;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Michigan Commission of Agriculture appreciates the prompt action of the Governor and encourages the Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture to act quickly in approving much needed disaster assistance to the affected growers in South and Southwest Michigan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Michigan Commission of Agriculture encourages the Michigan Congressional Delegation to do all within its power to provide additional Congressional funding, above and beyond normal disaster loan assistance, to help Michigan growers recover from this severe disaster; and,

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Michigan Commission of Agriculture encourages Congress to enact permanent disaster assistance legislation, specific to tree fruit, which recognizes the unique and long term impact of the loss of not only a single-year's crop, but loss of the tree and future year's crops as well.

### **ADJOURN**

MOTION: COMMISSIONER SKOGMAN MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 6:05 P.M.  
SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

The following documents are on file in the Commission of Agriculture office and are available upon request:

Attachment A Commission of Agriculture May 31-June 1, 2000, Meeting Minutes

Attachment B Director's Report – July 2000

Attachment C "The Fireblight Epidemic in Southwest Michigan"

Attachment D "Estimated Losses from Fireblight—Van Buren & Berrien Counties"

Attachment E Legislative Report – July 2000

Attachment F Ethanol Information

Attachment G "An Analysis of the Importance of Agriculture and the Food Sector to the Michigan Economy"

Attachment H The Office of Agriculture Development 1999 Annual Report

Attachment I Selection Criteria and Scoring System for Purchase of Development Rights

Attachment J Letters from Commission of Agriculture to Bob Goodell of Flushing, Michigan; Donald Jensen of Manistee County; Pete Hassing of Van Buren County, and Dale Irish of Saginaw County

Attachment K "Chlorpyrifos Revised Risk Assessment and Risk Mitigation Measures"

Attachment L Michigan Commission of Agriculture Resolution on Disaster Assistance